

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 17 has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the microscope electronic camera comprises filter coefficient setting means, connected to the color signal processing means, for setting a filter coefficient which accentuates a contour of each of color signals as the processed color image signal for suitable observation, in accordance with the magnification/specimen change information recognized by the recognizing means, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 40, line 21 to page 41, line 14.

Similarly, claim 20 has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the microscope electronic camera comprises a filter circuit which is connected to the color image control section and which accentuates a contour of each of color signals as the processed color image signal for suitable observation, in accordance with the magnification/specimen change information recognized by the microscope control section, as also supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 40, line 21 to page 41, line 14.

In addition, new independent claim 22 has been added to recite the features of the present invention whereby the color signal processing means separates a color image signal output from the imaging element into color signals in accordance with the changed setting information recognized by the recognizing means (see Fig. 11, element 125), and whereby the microscope electronic camera comprises both a filter circuit and filter coefficient setting means (see Fig. 11, elements 140 and 141).

Still further, new claim 23 has been added depending from claim 20 to recite filter coefficient setting means.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to claims 17 and 20 and the addition of claims 22 and 23 be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 17 and 20 were again rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 4,661,692 ("Kawasaki"). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that in the arguments filed October 1, 2003 the applicants admitted that "in some cases a neutral density filter may change the color of light passing through the filter and therefore provide contour accentuation." In addition, the Examiner further asserts that if

a neutral density filter is "capable of providing contour accentuation in a single instance, as stated by applicant, the claim language reads on the Kawasaki reference."

It is respectfully submitted, however, that no such statement was made in the Amendment filed October 1, 2003. In fact, as explained in the Amendment filed October 1, 2003, an "ND" or "Neutral Density" filter controls light to uniformly change the overall density or brightness of an image. And as clearly stated in the Amendment filed October 1, 2003, such a uniform change in density never results in contour accentuation of a color.

It is again respectfully pointed out that according to the present invention as recited in claims 17, 20 and 22, the filter circuit accentuates the contour (enhances the edge) of a color signal, as shown in Reference Fig. A attached hereto.

By contrast, an ND filter, as disclosed by Kawasaki, uniformly changes the overall density or brightness of a light, as shown in Reference Fig. B attached hereto. And it is respectfully submitted that Kawasaki's ND filter, which can never accentuate the contour of a color signal (i.e., which never enhances the edge of the color signal) is clearly completely different from the filter circuit according to the claimed present invention.

In addition, it is respectfully pointed out that according to the present invention as recited in independent claims 17, 20 and 22, the filter circuit (or filter coefficient of the filter coefficient setting means) accentuates the contour of a color signal.

By contrast, the ND filter of Kawasaki changes the density or brightness of a light.

That is, the filter circuit according to the claimed present invention is a signal processor, whereas the ND filter of Kawasaki is an optical filter. Accordingly, it is again respectfully submitted that the ND filter of Kawasaki is clearly completely different from the filter circuit according to the claimed present invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 17, 20 and 22, and dependent claim 23 all patentably distinguish over Kawasaki, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

* * * * *

Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

Application No. 09/912,989
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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